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[648] in which the national administrative apparatus affects the daily lives of Tepoztecans will be considered here.

TAXATION

[651] Federal taxation touches most Tepoztecans directly and is a common subject of complaint. Most Tepoztecans view it as an imposition and do not readily understand the need for taxation nor what is done with the money. In fact, Tepoztecans pay relatively little in federal taxes, primarily on the sale of charcoal, on the slaughter of animals, and on trade. Tepoztecans accept fatalistically the necessity of paying taxes, but it develops a negative and critical attitude toward the national government.

HEALTH SERVICES

[744] [757] The federal government has a health center in Cuernavaca which is frequented by some Tepoztecans. However, the majority, particularly the older people, do not use it because they still prefer *curanderos* and are not yet accustomed to the idea of receiving services from the state. Even the federal health workers who come into the village from time to time to administer inoculations against communicable disease are endured by most villagers out of "respect" for the great power of the government, rather than because of an understanding of their services.

AGRICULTURAL SERVICES

[656] The Departamento Agrario intervenes directly in the affairs of Tepoztecans who hold land under the *ejido* program. Federal authority is the final authority which resolves problems or conflicts concerning *ejido* lands. But here, too, many Tepoztecans see in the agrarian authorities an imposition rather than a system of public service. As we have shown earlier, the nationalization of the communal lands has lessened local control, and this has not been well accepted. Tepoztecans [423] do not yet understand the need for national control of forest resources, especially when such control conflicts with their local interests.

NATIONAL DEFENSE

Perhaps the clearest form in which the Tepoztecan peasant sees the power of the federal government is in the federal troops. Almost as a matter of tradition, [702] Tepoztecans have viewed soldiers with strong suspicion and dislike, and have fought attempts to conscript their sons. However, the attitude toward federal troops today is quite different from that shown toward the Federales of the Díaz [701] regime. Today the troops stationed in the village fraternize with the population; and though they are "respected" there is less of the fear that existed during the Díaz regime. Federal troops have been sent to the village on a number of occasions in recent years, once in connection with resistance to conscription during [702] the early part of World War II, and again when local political contests resulted in [666] violence.

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a sorry picture. Inefficiency, irresponsibility of officials, dishonesty and graft, lack of local funds for public improvements, betrayal by leaders, widespread suspicion of the government and its motives, lack of village unity, and apathy are among the salient traits.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The local government is known as the *ayuntamiento* and consists of the following officers: president, *síndico procurador*, *regidor de hacienda*, secretary of the *ayuntamiento*, treasurer, police chief, sub-police chief, *juez menor*, secretary to the *juez menor*, and porter. In addition there are eight *ayudantes*, each representing one of the *demarcaciones* of the village. The president, *síndico*, *regidor*, and *juez menor* are elected by popular vote for a two-year period.[1] The other officials are appointed by the president in agreement with the *síndico* and *regidor*.

The duties of the major officials are determined by state law. The way in which the officials function depends upon their personalities. A meek president will serve only as a figurehead and allow the *síndico* and secretary to run the government. An aggressive president may in turn take over the functions of the other officials. The president is the executive officer and as such is the official representative of the village in dealings with the outside. His signature is necessary for most correspondence and official acts. He sets the fines for infractions of the law; in addition, the inhabitants often bring their private difficulties and family quarrels to him.

The *síndico* is charged with responsibility for protecting the communal resources of the municipio, that is, the lands, forests, and water resources. It is he who guards the titles to these resources. He has authority to use the local police to apprehend anyone suspected of immoderate or illegal use of communal resources. The *síndico*, together with the president, inspects the accounts of the municipio. In addition, he is responsible for the inspection of cattle before they are slaughtered to determine that they are not diseased. He must inspect the cattle brands to be sure that the cattle have not been stolen. Furthermore, he is the sub-agent of the Ministerio Público, and in this capacity acts as an attorney general, responsible for investigating all violations of the laws of the state.

The *regidor* is responsible for the financial operations of the municipio, and the treasurer serves as his assistant.

By far the greatest number of tasks falls to the secretary of the *ayuntamiento*. He is generally the most literate of the officials, and the present officeholder is a competent typist. He opens and closes the government offices six days a week, signs all correspondence, attends all public functions, maintains the records of the municipio, advises the other officers of the state law, keeps the president informed of all complaints, and attends to all complaints and requests for certifications.

The chief of police is directly responsible to the president and the entire *ayun-*

[1] There have also been other changes in the number of government employees. The present government organization follows the requirements of the State Constitution of 1930. From 1910–30 the state of Morelos was under military rule.

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Year	*Income (Pesos)*
1934	4,011.80
1935	3,742.60
1936	—
1937	5,162.49
1938	4,795.75
1939	6,494.70
1940	7,088.58
1941	6,467.74
1942	7,617.03
1943	7,568.99

653 652 [66] [41]

Since the salaries of the officials amounted to over seven thousand pesos per year (during the forties), it is obvious that there was little money left over for public improvements. This is one of the demoralizing factors in local government and also one of the reasons that the Tepoztecans generally look to the federal government for help. Each president who enters office promises to do something for his pueblo. But he soon learns that there are no funds, not to mention the other difficulties. To make matters worse, many villagers are convinced that the local government officials, especially the president, *síndico*, *regidor*, and secretary, are dishonest and have a large income from illegal dealings. But this does not deny the fact that the official income is much too meager for any significant public works program with local funds.

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It will be noted that the municipio has practically no income from land taxes. Most of the taxes on land goes to the state government. The state government collected over sixty thousand pesos in taxes in the twelve years between 1931 and 1943 for which data are available.[6] During this entire period the only state funds which went back to the village were for the salary of the state tax collector who was paid on a pro rata basis.

The taxes which go to the federal government are considerably smaller than those which go to the state. Federal taxes taken out of Tepoztlán are shown in the following:

Year	*Pesos*
1938	2,529.86
1939	2,455.04
1940	—
1941	3,118.99
1942	3,794.55
1943	3,568.77

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The routine business of the local government consists primarily of issuing permits for various types of activities. The most frequent requests include the following:

Permits for fiestas, religious and secular
Permits for slaughter of animals

[6] These data were obtained from the official state tax records in Cuernavaca.

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Permits to utilize municipal resources: to cut wood, pasture animals, and gather stones
Requests for certifications of birth, death, and marriage
Requests to register brands on cattle
Requests for marriage licenses
Permits to repair streets
Requests for *ejido* plots
Permits to pipe water to a house from the main line
Permits to dynamite rock

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[691]

In addition to these routine functions, the local government, through the office of the *juez menor*, hears many complaints and quarrels. Complaints are usually first presented to the president, and he attempts to resolve the difficulty without recourse to the judge. The complaints most frequently heard by the president are given in the order of their frequency of occurrence.

Quarrels between neighbors about family matters
Litigations between neighbors over property matters
Quarrels due to drunkenness
Quarrels between neighbors over animals
Quarrels between husbands and wives
Quarrels because of damages caused by animals
Cases involving accusations of stealing of animals
Cases involving assault
Cases involving calumny
Charges of immorality
[847] Fraud
Infanticide

[681] When the quarrel cannot be settled by the president, it is passed on to the local judge, and occasionally Tepoztecans are jailed. An analysis of the records of the local justice for 1920, 1927, 1935, 1941, 1942, and 1943 revealed the types and frequency of cases shown in Table 53.

674 The thing to be noted about these data is the relatively high incidence of crime. An analysis of the relative frequency of each type of case shows that five offenses—robbery, lesions and blows, injuries and threats, calumny or defamation, and damages—account for 73 per cent of the 808 cases recorded. It must be remembered that these data are only for reported cases. A large number of cases never reach the judge.

174 ## *POLITICAL HISTORY*

As has been noted earlier, recent archaeological work in Tepoztlán shows a continued occupation of some sites since the Archaic period.[7] This would place the age of these sites at about the time of Christ. The early ceramic horizons show eastern and southern influences, and the later horizons show northern influences from

[7] Muller, *Chimalacatlan*, p. 55. See also Appendix B, p. 453.

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665 zation." It had two major projects: first, the building of a road to join the village
185 to Cuernavaca, and second, the preservation of the forests. The road building proj-
175 ect tended to unite the village temporarily although opposition to the idea was not lacking, especially from owners of mules who feared the road would hurt their business. But the Fraternales were less successful in their attempt to preserve the forests.

175 In 1930, Tepoztecans organized the Cooperativa Forestal Central de Tepoztlán
474 for the purpose of producing charcoal. The story of this cooperative deserves to be
314 told in detail, because it reflects so clearly the schisms and conflicting interests in the village. The story given here was obtained from leaders of the cooperative and
[665] leaders of the opposition group, the Fraternales. In addition, documents and re-
[127] ports concerning the cooperative were obtained from the Departamento Forestal in Mexico City.

Tepoztecans and inhabitants of the other villages of the municipio of Tepoztlán had traditionally relied upon the forest resources for their firewood and charcoal, and a handful of Tepoztecans had specialized in the making of charcoal which was sold locally. The forest resources constituted an important part of the subsistence economy. While the sale of wood outside of the village occurred, for example to the Hacienda of Oacalco, it was never on a large scale. For such enterprises
● [656] Tepoztecans were required to obtain a permit from the municipal authorities for 50 centavos a week.

In the early twenties the village of San Juan, taking advantage of its proximity to the railroad which runs through the village, and because of its limited agricultural resources, began to develop the charcoal industry on a commercial scale and exported large quantities of charcoal to Mexico City. In 1926 the villagers organized a forestry cooperative to meet the requirements of the national forestry law of 1926.[26] This was the first cooperative in the state of Morelos.

The authorities of Tepoztlán challenged the right of the village of San Juan to cut large numbers of trees from forests which were municipal rather than village property, and the residents of San Juan were prohibited from cutting trees. But they appealed their case directly to the national authorities, maintaining that the moun-
[648] tains in question were village property. The dispute was bitter and accompanied by some violence. It was finally settled by the intervention of federal authorities who ruled that the municipio had legal title to the land in question. In March, 1930, Tepoztlán organized its own cooperative to which the villagers of San Juan were admitted.

Juan Hidalgo, a poor young man from the central barrio of Santo Domingo, became president of the cooperative. Under his leadership the cooperative grew and prospered. In a short while it had over five hundred members, ninety-five per cent

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[648] [26] This was Mexico's first serious attempt to legislate for the conservation of its forest resources. The law took control of forest resources out of the hands of local municipal authorities and provided that permission from the forestry authorities was necessary before any trees could be cut.